Attorney Docket No. DEJI 1001-1US

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1.   (currently amended)   A computer-implemented method for use in deriving user intent from a subject message, for use further with a network of agents each having a view of its own natural language interpretation domain, comprising the steps of a first one of said agents:

receiving from an upchain agent a query inquiring whether at least part of said subject message is within the natural language interpretation domain of said first agent;

querying ~~at least one~~ agent each of a plurality of agents, each immediately downchain of said first agent whether the queried agent considers at least part of said subject message to be in the queried agent's natural language interpretation domain;

responding to said upchain agent tentatively whether at least part of said subject message is within the natural language interpretation domain of said first agent, after said first agent receives at least one response from said agents immediately downchain of said first agent, but before said first agent receives all responses from said agents immediately downchain of said first agent.

2.   (currently amended)   A method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of, after said step of responding, said first agent responding further to said upchain agent whether at least part of said subject message is within the natural language interpretation domain of said

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first agent, after said first agent receives at least one additional response from said agents

immediately downchain of said first agent.

3.   (previously presented)   A method according to claim 2, wherein said step of

said first agent responding further occurs in response to a second query received by said first

agent from said upchain agent inquiring whether at least part of said subject message is within

the natural language interpretation domain of said first agent.

4.   (original)   A method according to claim 2, wherein said step of said first

agent responding further occurs in response to said first agent receiving said at least one

additional response.

5.   (currently amended)   A ~~computer-implemented method for processing a subject~~

~~message, by a network of agents including an originating agent and at least one agent downchain~~

~~of said originating agent, each agent in said network having a view of its own natural language~~

~~interpretation domain, comprising the steps of said originating agent:~~

~~querying at least one of the agents downchain of said originating agent in said network a~~

~~first time, whether the queried agent considers at least part of said subject message to be in the~~

~~queried agent's natural language interpretation domain;~~method according to claim 1, wherein said

first query ~~including~~ includes a first depth-of-search indication~~,~~ further comprising the steps of

said first agent:

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resolving any conflicting responses from said queried agents to identify a prevailing one of said immediately downchain agents to whom said subject message should be passed; and

instructing said prevailing agent to handle at least part of said subject message.

6.   (currently amended)   A method according to claim 5, further comprising the steps of a firstparticular one of said queried agents, in response to said query:

determining whether a depth of said firstparticular agent exceeds said depth of search indication, and if so, disclaiming said subject message.

7.   (currently amended)   A method according to claim 5, further comprising the steps of a firstparticular one of said queried agents, in response to said query where a depth of said firstparticular agent does not exceed said depth of search indication:

determining whether at least part of said subject message is within said firstparticular agent's local natural language interpretation domain, and if so, returning a response to said originatingfirst agent claiming at least part of said message.

8.   (currently amended)   A method according to claim 5, further comprising the steps of a firstparticular one of said queried agents, in response to said query where a depth of said firstparticular agent does not exceed said depth of search indication:

determining whether at least part of said subject message is within said firstparticular agent's local natural language interpretation domain;

and where said subject message is not within said firstparticular agent's local natural

language interpretation domain but said firstparticular agent has further agents downchain of said

firstparticular agent, querying at least one of said further agents whether the further agent

considers at least part of said subject message to be in the further agent's natural language

interpretation domain.

9.   (currently amended)   A method according to claim 5, further comprising the step

of, after said step of querying said agents immediately downchain of said originating agent a first

time, querying said agents immediately downchain of said originating agent a second time

whether the queried agent considers at least part of said subject message to be in the queried

agent's natural language interpretation domain.

10.   (original)   A method according to claim 9, wherein said second query

includes a second depth-of-search indication which exceeds said first depth-of-search indication.

11.   (currently amended)   A computer-implemented method for processing a subject

message, by a network of agents including an originating agent and, at least one agent downchain

of said originating agent, and a plurality of agents each immediately downchain of a first one of

said agents downchain of said originating agent, each agent in said network having a view of its

own natural language interpretation domain, comprising the steps of said originating agent:

~~querying at least one of the agents downchain of~~ said originating agent ~~in~~querying at least

said ~~network~~first agent a first time, whether the ~~queried~~first agent considers at least part of said

subject message to be in the ~~queried~~first agent's natural language interpretation domain;

in response to said first query of said first agent, said first agent querying each of said

agents immediately downchain of said first agent, whether the immediately downchain agent

considers at least part of said subject message to be in the immediately downchain agent's natural

language interpretation domain;

in response to said first agent receiving at least one response from said immediately

downchain agents but without waiting to receive responses from all of said immediately

downchain agents, said first agent responding to said originating agent whether at least a part of

said subject message is within the natural language interpretation domain of said first agent;

said originating agent subsequently querying said ~~queried agents~~first agent a second time

whether the ~~queried~~first agent considers at least part of said subject message to be in the

~~queried~~first agent's natural language interpretation domain;

said originating agent resolving any conflicting responses from said ~~queried agents~~agents

downchain of said originating agent to identify a prevailing one of said agents downchain

~~agents~~of said originating agent to whom at least part of said subject message should be passed;

and

said originating agent instructing said prevailing agent to handle at least part of said

subject message.

12.   (original)   A method according to claim 11, wherein said prevailing agent is a community of agents.

13.   (currently amended)   A method according to claim 11, further comprising the steps of a ~~first~~second one of said ~~queried agents, in response to one of said queries~~ agents queried in said step of said originating agent querying a first time:

determining whether at least part of said subject message is within said ~~first~~second agent's local natural language interpretation domain;

and where at least part of said subject message is within said ~~first~~second agent's local natural language interpretation domain, returning a response to said originating agent claiming at least part of said subject message.

14.   (currently amended)   A method according to claim 11, further comprising the steps of a ~~first~~second one of said ~~queried agents, in response to one of said queries~~ agents queried in said step of said originating agent querying a first time:

determining whether at least part of said subject message is within said ~~first~~second agent's local natural language interpretation domain;

and where said subject message is not within said ~~first~~second agent's local natural language interpretation domain and said ~~first~~second agent has no further downchain agents, returning a response to said originating agent disclaiming said subject message.

15.   (currently amended)   A method according to claim 11, further comprising the

steps of a ~~first~~second one of said ~~queried agents, in response to one of said queries~~ agents

queried in said step of said originating agent querying a first time:

determining whether at least part of said subject message is within said ~~first~~second agent's

local natural language interpretation domain;

and where said subject message is not within said ~~first~~second agent's local natural

language interpretation domain but said ~~first~~second agent has further agents downchain of said

~~first~~second agent, querying at least one of said further agents whether the further agent considers

at least part of said subject message to be in the further agent's natural language interpretation

domain.

16.   (currently amended)   A method according to claim 11, wherein said step of said

originating agent querying a first time comprises the step of providing to each ~~of said queried~~

~~agents~~agent queried in said step of said originating agent querying a first time, a first depth-of-

search indication for said subject message,

and wherein said step of said originating agent querying a second time comprises the step

of providing to each ~~of said~~agent queried ~~agents~~in said originating agent querying a second time,

a second depth-of-search indication for said subject message, said second depth-of-search

indication indicating a deeper search than said first depth-of-search indication.

17.   (currently amended)   A method according to claim 11, further comprising the steps of a ~~first~~particular one of said ~~queried agents~~agents immediately downchain of said first agent:

determining in response to said first query whether at least part of said subject message is within said ~~first~~particular agent's local natural language interpretation domain;

where at least part of said subject message is within said ~~first~~particular agent's local natural language interpretation domain, returning a response to said ~~originating~~first agent claiming at least part of said subject message; and

where said subject message is not within said ~~first~~particular agent's local natural language interpretation domain but said ~~first~~particular agent has further agents downchain of said ~~first~~particular agent, querying in response to said second query at least one of said further agents whether the further agent considers at least part of said subject message to be in the further agent's natural language interpretation domain.

18.   (currently amended)   A method according to claim 17, further comprising the steps of said ~~first~~particular queried agent:

receiving a group of at least one response from said further agents downchain of said ~~first~~particular agent, in response to said step of querying said further agents; and

returning a response to said ~~originating~~first agent in response to said step of receiving.